



U.S. Department of Justice

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DISGRUNTLED FORMER EMPLOYEE PLEADS GUILTY TO UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS OF COMPANY COMPUTERS

ROCKFORD – PATRICK J. FITZGERALD, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and ROBERT D. GRANT, Special Agent-In-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”), today made the following announcement:

LEE CHEN, 50, of Rockford, Illinois, pleaded guilty today in federal court in Rockford to a charge of unauthorized access of protected computers used in interstate commerce and communication causing a loss to the owner of the computers in excess of \$5000 in a one year period.

According to the plea agreement, Chen is a former employee of a Loves Park company (the “Company”) who worked in the Information Technology Department. Chen admitted in the plea agreement that after his termination of employment with the Company in 2005 he began accessing the Company’s computer system without authorization using computers owned by him and his new employer. Specifically, Chen admitted that from April 2005 through October 12, 2005 he accessed the Company’s computer network through the internet, primarily using passwords he retained from his work at the Company setting up the web based Microsoft Windows Outlook e-mail accounts of other employees. According to the plea agreement, Chen downloaded thousands of computer files, deleted customer files, changed the prices on invoices bound for customers, and other tampering with the Company’s computer files. During the time of the computer intrusions by Chen, the Company’s computer network was significantly slower. Chen also acknowledged in the plea agreement that the Company was forced to spend over \$10,000 to restore the integrity of its computer system.

Sentencing for Chen has been scheduled for February 27, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. Chen faces a maximum sentence of up to 12 months of imprisonment, a period of supervised release following imprisonment of up to one year, a maximum fine of up to \$100,000, and restitution. Chen’s actual sentence will be determined by the United States District Court, guided by the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The case was investigated by the Chicago office of the FBI, and is being prosecuted in federal court by Assistant United States Attorney MICHAEL D. LOVE.

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